

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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1. A general reduction in the strength of the Soviet Army within the USSR was in progress during summer 1954. Many units which had been maintained at full strength since World War II were reduced to cadre strength. This skeletonizing process, called kadrirovaniye, consisted of the removal of all enlisted personnel from every third battalion to a regiment, and the reduction of the officer strength in this battalion to a skeleton cadre.¹ This reduction was not being effected in Soviet Army units beyond the territorial limits of the USSR.

2. The various staffs of the military districts and the Ministry of Defense were also affected by this general reduction in force.

3. Many Soviet officers affected by these reductions are being transferred to reserve status. [] officers with 20 or more years of service are demobilized on 40 percent of their active duty pay. However, those officers who have less than 20 years of service receive no pay at all. This has imposed great hardships on some of the Soviet reserve officers, particularly those who have no civilian specialties. As an example of this, [] a demobilized lieutenant colonel [] is a watchman at the Gorkiy Park of Rest and Culture [in Moscow?].

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4. Some of the officer personnel which have been affected by headquarters reductions are being transferred to the Far East, probably to China. In addition, some officers returning from Soviet occupied areas in Western Europe are being transferred to the Far East.

5. Simultaneously with the reductions in headquarters staffs and Army units within the USSR, steps have been taken to increase the size of the reserve cadre of junior officers. Currently, junior officers are being demobilized immediately upon graduation from military schools. However, prior to this recent policy, young men with 16 or more years of schooling would normally have been drafted into the service for three years (or, in some

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services, for four years). These men are now being admitted to military schools for three-year courses of study, upon completion of which they receive credit for having completed their military service. Some graduates of these schools are retained in military service as commissioned officers, but the bulk of them are demobilized and transferred into the junior officer reserve.

6. The following additional change has been instituted in the Soviet Army. The function of platoon leader is no longer an officer duty assignment, but is being filled by senior sergeants and master sergeants.

1. Comment: There is no indication of whether this is a temporary or a long-term reduction.

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